

Howard County BRAC Task Force (HC-BRAC-TF)

Task Force Memorandum: 2008-09

For: Howard County BRAC Constituency

Subject: Update on Fort Meade Growth Impacts and Opportunities

Date: 8 July 2008

Originator: Kent Menser, Executive Director of the HC BRAC Office

PURPOSE: The purpose of this memorandum is to update our Fort Meade Growth/BRAC constituency on the latest actions, events and schedules related to this important effort. This document is different from our other memorandums in that it contains our response to a business query for a document outlining our Task Force growth and maturation. In the name of complete transparency, we wanted everyone to have the information whether they needed or not! That said, if you have a different perspective or additional information on the subjects below, please send me an email. kmenser@howardcountymd.gov

**HOWARD COUNTY MARYLAND BRAC
TASK FORCE DEVELOPMENT HISTORY
8 JULY 2008**

1. BACKGROUND:

- a. Fort Meade is located in center of the Baltimore-Washington Transportation Corridor. It currently has over 40,000 employees and 15,000 residents surrounded by a growing suburban environment. The National Security Agency is its largest tenant.
- b. In the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) it is the recipient of three organizations; Defense Information Systems Agency, Defense Media Agency and the Defense Adjudication Agencies, who will bring a total of 5,695 positions to the installation. Significantly, BRAC is but one component of overall growth of 22,000 positions on Fort Meade during the period from 2005 to 2020. The other three components are:
 - i. National Security Agency (NSA): 4,000
 - ii. Enhanced Use Lease (EUL): 10,000
 - iii. Other growth on Fort Meade: 2,000
- c. Howard County is located midway between Baltimore and Washington DC and one and a half miles west of Fort Meade. It has a population of 265,000, a County Executive/Council form of government and is the third wealthiest county in the United States. Additionally, it is the sole unit of government—no incorporated cities, towns or subdivisions. Significantly, it is the home of over 15,000 Fort Meade employees and has a strong history of volunteerism.

2. BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE (BRAC) AND HOWARD COUNTY

- a. After the announcement of the 2005 BRAC, the County Executive chartered what was then called the Howard County Expansion Management Task Force. Even though BRAC is only one component of the growth we are addressing, we changed the name to the Howard County BRAC Task Force because it provided better branding with all of the BRAC publicity!
- b. Initially, the County Executive appointed 26 citizens who either lived and/or worked in the county to be members of the Task Force. For the most part,

they were community leaders who represented a cross section of backgrounds and interests in the county, to include, but not limited to: community activists, county staff and business leaders.

- c. The Director of the Howard County BRAC Office and Chairperson of the Task Force was selected by the County Executive and continues to report to the County Executive. Initially, he was on contract and funded by the county, but after a year the Director became a county employee and is currently funded through an OEA grant. Another 6 months later a BRAC analyst was hired by the county and is also funded through an OEA grant.
- d. At the start, we established core values and several strong themes:
 - i. Values: Commitment, Focus and complete Transparency in all communications and work.
 - ii. Themes:
 - Maximize participation and the awareness of all members of the Howard County Community in the BRAC growth preparation process. Bring as many people into the planning process as possible. Use every communications and marketing channel available. Communication examples are: public presentations, email distribution, websites and outreach presentations to any individual or organization who requests it.
 - Identify the issues, impacts and opportunities that Fort Meade growth will bring to Howard County
 - Substantiate conclusions and recommendations with fact-based analysis
 - Transform the massive amount of BRAC data into relevant, actionable information for our stakeholders
 - Transform findings into a decision-support format for our leadership.
- e. Task Force Phase I (Discovery: 5 months)
 - i. Organization:
 - *Howard County Committee*: Make sure we actually understand Howard County's organization, role and issues. Specifically, identify the most important and urgent issues caused by Fort Meade growth.
 - Results: The Committee identified critical issues in the following functional areas: Education, Health and Human Services, Housing, Infrastructure, Transportation, and Work Force Development.
 - *BRAC Committee*: Make sure we understand BRAC's impacts and opportunities thoroughly:
 - Results: During its research into published Maryland BRAC studies, this committee developed questions on the origination of some numbers and decided to develop an internal modeling capability
 - *Resource Planning Committee*: Find funding to support Task Force study requirements.

- Results: Combined with another county and a small, local city for the award of OEA grants in the study of: Transportation, Housing and Human Services.
- f. Task Force Phase II (Analysis)
- i. Organization:
- Eleven Committees were established during this phase, each with co-chairs; one volunteer and one management-level person from the county staff. The purpose of this leadership structure was to ensure that all Task Force briefings to the County Executive would reflect a coordinated position with the county staff! The committees are:
 - *Core Group*: 5 highly qualified and experienced professionals/executives that provide day to day insight and guidance to the Executive Director on the full range of leadership and organizational subjects.
 - *Executive*: 15 Senior Business and Community Leaders. Advisory in nature, representing a full range of County leaders from all sectors.
 - *Plans and Analysis*: Professional consultants, urban planners, computer modelers, strategic planners, school planners, state planners, etc. who work as volunteers to provide analytical support to the functional committees, and to ensure consistency across the committee structure in underlying assumptions and methodologies. This unit is capable of generating results comparable to any top professional consulting firm.
 - *Lessons Learned*: Review past and current BRAC actions for best practices and worst decisions!
 - *Resource Partners*: This committee consists of citizens, business men and women, and businesses that do not have the time to participate on a committee but want to be part of the process. They are an “as-required” resource.
 - *Education Committee*
 - *Health and Human Services Committee*
 - *Housing Committee*
 - *Infrastructure Committee*
 - *Public Safety*
 - *Transportation Committee*
 - *Work Force Development Committee*
- ii. Phase II Results:
- GENERAL PLAN. Howard County General Plan adequate to absorb BRAC growth
 - REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE. Key resources and facilities at or near capacity in four critical areas:

- Highway Congestion
- Critical Workforce Skills
- Disaster Management
- Solid Waste Disposal
- LOCAL NEEDS. BRAC growth likely to exacerbate needs in the areas of:
 - Affordable Housing
 - Services for Children, Seniors, and Mental Health

g. Task Force Phase III: (Assessment)

i. Organization:

- As a result of Phase II, we added one more committees to our Task Force: Family Support. This brought the Task Force up to 12 committees and 180 members.
- Laying out Task Force work in phases gives Task Force leadership the opportunity to set mid-range goals, adjust focus and report to the County Executive in a timely manner.
- Events provided the opportunity to review the State BRAC Action Plan, which was produced in parallel with our Phase II. The purpose of the review was to identify any issues involving alignment, content or omission in the State Plan vs. the County Plan. The results of that assessment were presented to our County Executive and later sent in a letter/report to the Lt. Governor from the Howard County Executive.

ii. Phase III Results:

- There is general alignment between the two plans, but more planning work needs to be accomplished at both levels
- Two key BRAC-related Howard County Highway projects have been left out of the state plan
- The state plan does not currently address the areas of Public Safety and Health and Human Services

h. Task Force Phase IV: (Silo Crunching)

i. Organization:

- No substantial changes in committee structure or manning. Although our functional committees performed extremely well, the task force co-chairs and executive director recognized that many key issues reach across functional boundaries and cannot be addressed by committees – or county departments for that matter – acting independently. During Phase IV we are going to develop new ideas on how to overcome the barriers posed by the functional boundaries. For example if a county has a workforce availability problem that is primarily caused by lack of affordable housing in the county, in addition to the development of affordable housing we might test the feasibility of expanding mass transit facilities and services.

3. FORT MEADE REGIONAL GROWTH MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (RGMC):

- a. We have strong, effective county governments in Maryland, but many of the dynamic forces and issues that affect our families and our business are regional in nature: transportation, workforce development and emergency services among the more pressing. The RGMC -- established to find ways to address these regional needs -- consists of eight counties and two cities. The RGMC's mission is:

Mobilize local governments in the region to respond to the opportunities and impacts of growth – in particular Fort Meade-related growth – in a coordinated and timely manner.

- a. Currently the RGMC is in the process of hiring a regional transportation coordinator who will lead the committee's first subcommittee; transportation. The next two subcommittees to be staffed will be in the areas of Emergency Services and Workforce Development.
- b. Ultimately, we believe that this will be the most important organization in the region for addressing the issues raised by BRAC/Fort Meade growth.

Question on this paper or related topics? Contact Kent Menser at:
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